

### ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method and system for masking a surface to be etched is described. A droplet source ejects droplets of a masking material for deposit on a thin-film or other substrate surface to be etched. The temperature of the thin-film or substrate surface is controlled such that the droplets rapidly freeze upon contact with the thin-  
5 film or substrate surface. The thin-film or substrate is then etched. After etching the masking material is removed.

Approved for release